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Educational Writings

A SURVEY OF RECENT BOOKS IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH

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I. TEACHERS' HELPS

During the past twelve months six volumes have been sent to the *School Review* which may be classified as English teachers' aids. The first is *Our Living Language*¹ by Howard R. Driggs. The author has prepared a popularly written book, well suited for teachers' reading circles and for the supplementary reading of classes in methods of teaching English. He is a vigorous champion of what he calls "the American language," a living, growing, vital language. He advocates language training along "life lines of natural interests, experience, and service." "To teach our American language successfully," he says, "we must deal with it as something alive; we must teach it from the American viewpoint, and by truly democratic methods."

The book has a timely message; it is definite in plan and written in simple diction; it is straightforward in aim and method. As one commentator remarks, "Driggs's book is Wordsworthian; one yearns for a little quickening of the sap." But the interest is mainly in content, not in style. Driggs steers a medium course between decadent conversation and untried radicalism. He offers nothing outstandingly new, but assembles, under the slogan *serviceful self-expression*, the large variety of sound though somewhat chaotic pedagogical theories now extant into a practical system which he designates "the democratic method."

In *English Problems in the Solving*² Miss Sarah E. Simons has produced a book the substance of which was organized for lectures on the teaching of English in Johns Hopkins. Miss Simons' own contributions have been supplemented by several chapters, among the best in the book, by two

¹ HOWARD R. DRIGGS, *Our Living Language*. Chicago: University Publishing Co., 1920. Pp. 302.

² SARAH E. SIMONS, *English Problems in the Solving*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1920. Pp. 239.

colleagues, teachers in the Central High School of Washington, D.C. The treatment of the field is comprehensive rather than intensive; seven chapters are divided into from four to ten parts each, in all some forty topics, ranging from "The Problems of Grammar" to "The Drama." Herein lies the difficulty. For example, Miss McCohn, who wrote the section on "The Drama," found herself limited in space to five pages. We can imagine the impatience of a capable writer who, with a large subject, finds herself so handicapped. However, the treatment, necessarily more or less sketchy in spots, is evidently intended to guide the reader into further investigation in lines of his special interest. To this end the authors have appended to each section a series of problems for investigation, together with an appropriate bibliography consisting of references to articles in the pedagogy of English.

The authors' own views on controverted questions are clearly and unequivocally stated. For example, they stand for the separation of composition and literature but do not accept the radical advice of Snedden and others, that the two branches of English should be in the hands of entirely different sets of teachers. Again, on the use of scales, they refer the reader to leaders of the extreme wings, S. A. Courtis on the one hand, and C. H. Ward on the other. Again, the writers take a strong stand for "conscious, deliberate, rational imitation" as a means of learning to write. *English Problems in the Solving* will make its place as a reading-circle book, as a reference book for classes of teachers, and as a textbook in normal schools and colleges.

The third book here classified as a teachers' aid, *Learning to Write*,¹ is an attempt to gather and arrange in one volume all that Robert Louis Stevenson has left bearing directly upon the art of writing. The editor groups his excerpts to show something of Stevenson's theory of the craft of writing before leading the reader into a discussion of intricate technical details.

The book is perhaps best suited for teachers and for other more mature readers. However, one good test of the efficiency of a high-school English department might be this: How many of the more capable pupils can appreciate the sane yet brilliant observations of the master-artist upon his own craft?

Teachers who have used Greever and Jones's *The Century Handbook of Writing*, either as a text or as a highly useful reference book, will welcome a companion handbook, *The Facts and Backgrounds of Literature*,² in the preparation of which one of the authors of the former book has participated. Quite obviously the decimal plan of the composition book, in which the language references are reduced to one hundred, cannot be utilized in the new compilation. However, the front and back pages of *The Facts and Backgrounds of Literature* set forth in outline form the major periods of English literature, the place of each chronological subdivision in the body of the book being indicated

¹ JOHN WILLIAM ROGERS, JR. (Editor), *Learning to Write: Suggestions and Counsel from Robert Louis Stevenson*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920. Pp. 225.

² GEORGE F. REYNOLDS and GARLAND GREEVER, *The Facts and Backgrounds of Literature*. New York: Century Co., 1920. Pp. 425.

by convenient page references. Part I presents "The Development of English Literature"; Part II, "American Literature"; Part III, "The Forms of Literature." An Appendix of sixty pages contains a condensed account of English customs, beliefs, institutions, games, holidays, and the like, which are intimately associated with the origin and history of our literature. Fifty illustrations, ranging from an "Anglo-Saxon Mansion" to a "Western Round-Up," enliven the book. An admirable reference work for senior high-school classes studying the history of literature.

A manual of reading,¹ outlining methods for *The Boys' and Girls' Readers*, texts for the middle grades, has been prepared by the author of that popular series. It is of interest to junior high-school teachers chiefly because of the introductory chapter, which discusses silent reading, oral reading, and appreciation as three co-ordinate phases of the reading problem. One might raise a question concerning Miss Bolenius' statement, "In silent reading it is the meanings of words that count most." However, it is encouraging to find so influential a textbook-maker endeavoring to lead the way in establishing definite programs for the most fundamental language skill—silent, assimilative reading.

Most English teachers are acquainted with one or more of James C. Fernald's textbooks, dictionaries, or more general treatises on various aspects of the vernacular. His latest volume, *Expressive English*,² may be properly called a series of essays, all dealing with the tool or workmanship aspects of the mother-tongue, and all growing out of the extensive experience which the author himself has enjoyed as a competent workman in his chosen field. Various classes of readers will be interested in different parts of the book. For example, the student of the history of the language will profit by chapters i, "The Simplicity of English," iii, "The Treasury of Words," and v, "English Synonyms"; the student of *belles lettres*, by chapters ii, "The Power of English," and iv, "A World Literature in English." The student of effective writing and speaking will profit by the last half of the book, the chapters dealing with appropriate topics. Mr. Fernald evidently defends the thesis that effectiveness in expression rests irrevocably upon inventive, orderly, fluent, and correct thinking.

II. BOOKS ON MODERN POETRY

Distinctly encouraging for those who believe that English literature should be taught as a living reality is the constantly increasing number of books on modern authors. Of one of these books, *New Voices*,³ the author says: "A book for everybody who wishes to know what the poets of today are thinking and feeling, how they are saying what they think and feel, and why they

¹ EMMA MILLER BOLENIUS, *Teachers' Manual of Silent and Oral Reading*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919. Pp. 229.

² JAMES C. FERNALD, *Expressive English*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1919. Pp. 463.

³ MARGUERITE WILKINSON, *New Voices*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1919.

say it in the way they do." This is a group of critical and friendly essays, perhaps more friendly than critical. Evidently the author agrees with Lemaitre that "discussion of one's contemporaries is not criticism but conversation," for she interprets her poets for the reader and then leaves the forming of a critical judgment to his own discretion. Miss Wilkinson stresses the point that to many of us a *particular kind of poetry means poetry*, and warns us to beware lest like "Poor Jim Jay (we) get stuck fast in yesterday." Under the two general divisions, "The Technique of Contemporary Poetry," and "The Spirit of Contemporary Poetry," she discusses the chief poets of our day, illustrating her points by two hundred poems which have been published since 1900. To the teacher of poetry the book furnishes a form by which present-day poems may be measured and a key to the interpretation of modern tendencies in verse.

New books, by a new firm, for a new emphasis in English classrooms, are the two companion textbooks, *Modern American Poetry*, and *Modern British Poetry*,¹ of which Louis Untermeyer is editor. The anthologies are certainly companion books in that they present well-selected illustrations of the modern poetry of the common language on the two sides of the Atlantic from 1870 to 1920. Both are small anthologies, suitable in form and content for senior high-school classes. The poems in *Modern American Poetry*, several hundred of them, are chosen from "America's poetic renaissance," most of them by poets still living. Many are short, vigorous, manly poems, ranging from "When the Frost Is on the Pumpkin" to "I Have a Rendezvous with Death." They are well selected to illustrate the editor's thesis that present-day poetry "delights in searching for stronger beauty and in portraying rugged realities." Modern poetry differs from older poetry in that it chooses familiar subjects; it uses simple, unstilted language, avoiding ornate phrasing, and it discards intricate versification for lines which reflect and suggest the tones of ordinary conversation. There is not a poem in the first book the theme of which is objectionable for high-school classes.

In his admirable introductory essay of *Modern British Poetry* Mr. Untermeyer says:

Broadly speaking, modern American verse is short, vigorously experimental, full of youth and its occasional and natural crudities. English verse is smoother, more matured, and, moulded by centuries of literature, richer in associations and surer in artistry. . . . The American output is often rude, extremely varied and unco-ordinated (being the expression of partly indigenous, partly naturalized, and largely unassimilated ideas, emotions and races); the English product is formulated, precise, and, in spite of its fluctuations, true to its past.

What better project, say for one month, than for a high-school senior class to delve into these and other comparisons? There are two poems in the

¹ LOUIS UNTERMAYER (Editor), *Modern American Poetry*, 1919, pp. 170, and *Modern British Poetry*, 1920, pp. 233. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Howe.

second book which the present writer wishes had been omitted for high-school classes.

III. JUNIOR HIGH-SCHOOL BOOKS

That the junior high school is coming to be a recognized institution is evidenced by the fact that many textbooks are appearing designed, and frequently named, for the new school. Three composition books from the pens of writers who have already prepared successful senior high-school texts have appeared in 1920. The first, *Elementary Lessons in Everyday English*,¹ is, like the text of similar name for senior high schools, an exasperating book. Miss Bolenius is incomparably rich in ideas, fertile in suggestions, inexhaustible in devices; not an English textbook-maker in the field approaches her in the respects named. On the other hand, her late book, like her earlier, gives the impression of a hodge-podge, little portions or pieces of language work, all of them well enough in themselves, dumped together in a big container and shaken up.

This impression, it is fair to say, is not wholly justified; there is a sort of sequence of various parts. For example, the book is intended to cover three years' work, one guesses the middle grades, though the author does not say so. The first year covers Part I, called "Getting Ideas"; second year, "Giving Ideas"; third year, "The Art of Speaking and Writing Well." That sort of a partition is exactly no partition at all. The various parts are treated as if they all cover the same ground; and they do! The crazy-quilt style of organization is the inevitable result.

The book is unique in that it is composed of sixty projects in oral and written composition—twenty to the year—each providing *pupil initiative* in purposeful activity. This element alone ought to place the book on the desk of every teacher of seventh- and eighth-grade English. The socialized recitation, supervised class activities, the emphasizing of social interests, and Americanization spirit—these and many other commendable features delight an English teacher. The reader is struck by the fact that Part III seems just as elementary as Part II, and both as elementary as Part I. There is no apparent progressive *difficulty* of succeeding divisions. In short, the book is a brilliant but hectic pioneer in project teaching.

When Alfred M. Hitchcock publishes a new textbook in English we may be certain that the teaching of that subject will be profoundly influenced in a very large number of schools. His latest, called *Junior English Book*,² adapts the general methods of his older practice books to the needs of younger students. Practice exercises abound in composition, both oral and written, and in word and sentence drills. Each of the ten chapters in Part I, or "courses,"

¹EMMA MILLER BOLENIUS, *Elementary Lessons in Everyday English*. New York: American Book Co., 1920. Pp. 340.

²ALFRED M. HITCHCOCK, *Junior English Book*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1920. Pp. 442.

as the text calls them, is divided into "Composition" and "Drill Exercises." Part II, "Grammar with Attention Directed to Common Errors," treats in successive chapters "Parts of Speech," "The Sentence," "Nouns," "Pronouns," etc. As the author says in his Preface, he "advances no new theory of instruction." Hitchcock solves the difficulty of correlating composition and language work by separating them. The danger is that with the *Junior English Book* as a textbook unskilful teachers may teach composition exclusively in the eighth grade and grammar in the ninth grade.

Essentials of English,¹ intended for use in the seventh and eighth grades, is by no means merely a revision of the second book of the same authors' earlier series, *Essentials of English*. Apparently the writers have set themselves the task of preparing a junior high-school English text. The earlier production laid emphasis on grammar with composition incidental; the later book exactly reverses this emphasis. The class using this text will be confronted in various chapters with "How to Tell a Story," "How to Write in Good Form," "How to Write Letters," "How to Express Thoughts Accurately," "Some Everyday Uses of the Mother-Tongue," and the like. Functional grammar is taught inductively throughout the text. There is considerable discursive material in the text itself, in which the authors discourse with the learner. This is a laboratory book designed for a composition workshop. Indeed, the changes made by Pearson and Kirchwey in their two texts for the seventh and eighth grades are representative of changes by which junior high-school English is to make over the old elementary-school procedure of the same grades.

Of a different order is the final book in the present classification, *Atlantic Prose and Poetry*.² It consists of sixty charming selections from the sixty-two volumes of the *Atlantic Monthly*, selections chosen for children of upper grammar grades and junior high schools. They range from a story of "The Airman's Escape," by an aviator of 1918, to "Old Times on the Mississippi," by Mark Twain—delightful reading for old folk and for young. One wishes that the editors had given volume and page references to the bound volumes of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Children might be led to search old volumes for the originals. Of course, such researches may be made, but with somewhat greater difficulty, through indexes of authors' names. Fifteen pictures break the monotony of closely printed pages. The editors assert that they have "endeavored to assemble an attractive library volume . . . of compelling interest . . . to this younger groups of pupils." They have succeeded.

IV. SENIOR HIGH-SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

A legitimate excuse for writing another textbook in English composition is the conviction on the part of the author that he has a real contribution to

¹ HENRY CARR PEARSON and MARY F. KIRCHWEY, *Essentials of English, Higher Grades*. New York: American Book Co., 1920. Pp. 469.

² CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS and W. D. PAUL (Editors), *Atlantic Prose and Poetry*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1919. Pp. 387.

make. Either he must have new materials or he must have fresh and vigorous methods of treating traditional materials. He should, indeed, have both. Judged by this standard, Robert M. Gay's *Writing through Reading*¹ may be called a new-fashioned way of presenting old-fashioned materials. In his Preface, Professor Gay states his thesis: "The old-fashioned exercises in reproduction certainly do supply the needed compulsion [compulsion for students to *improve* their English] for they permit no approximations, no vague thinking, no loose diction. . . . All chapters really deal with the same subject—the retelling of another person's thought."

Perhaps it is fair to say that the citation just given presents one-half of the author's theory of writing, namely, laboratory composition exercises in reproduction predominating, not more than one-third, at most one-half, of which should be original. The rest should be definite intensive problems in expression in which the student's incentive is emulation, and the product is of a sort that he, the writer himself, can form a fair estimate of his success.

The other half of Professor Gay's theory is that *reading* and *thinking* are the routes through which virility in expression is to be reached—the only routes. This book, then, couples training in *reading* with training in *writing* and looks upon both as processes in effective thinking. Important chapters with abundant exercises are: "Translation," "Paraphrasing," "The Abstract and Other Forms of Condensation," "Imitation and Emulation." Beyond all question *Writing through Reading* is the type of textbook which eleventh- and twelfth-grade classes in composition ought to be able to follow with great profit.

*Sentences and Thinking*² is a practice book in sentence making, designed for the first term of junior-college English. It is quite suitable for vigorous language review work in the last high-school year. The authors have sought absolute essentials. Moreover, their exceedingly sensible approach asks students to think out the reasons that lie behind grammatical and rhetorical rules. The heart of the book, in chapter ii, is a study of the principles of subordination, parallelism, emphasis, economy—all of which demand the prerequisite of clear thinking.

C. H. Ward, the well-known author of *What Is English* and *Sentence and Theme*, has this year produced a tenth-grade textbook called *Theme Building*.³ The book is thoroughly sound: Part I, "Planning the Composition"; Part II, "The Paragraph"; Part III, "Sentences"; Part IV, "Words"; Part V, "Details of the Whole Composition"; Part VI, "Themes for Criticism"—twenty-five chapters in all, arranged logically by beginning with the study of the *whole*, and proceeding to the study of subdivisions and finally smaller elements,

¹ ROBERT M. GAY, *Writing through Reading*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920. Pp. 109.

² NORMAN FOERSTER and J. M. STEADMAN, JR., *Sentences and Thinking*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919. Pp. 121.

³ C. H. WARD, *Theme Building*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1920. Pp. 562.

sustained writing and speaking. The book is sound also in that it teaches rhetorical principles by elaborate *inductive* study of examples and by abundant practice in writing. The book is sound in the third place because it systematically and uniformly emphasizes in every chapter the organization of the thought, the structure of the theme, as the rhetorical matter of supreme importance. Not the least important part of the text is an extensive appendix, to be used for purposes of review with deficient tenth-graders. Letter forms, spelling, grammar, and punctuation are furnished for such review in a small reference work compactly stated. The entire book is well adapted for laboratory procedure in sophomore classes studying composition.

Theme Building emphasizes written composition; does not pay much attention to oral composition; has very definite assignments; presents an abundance of illustrative material; makes possibly too much criticism, and has some selections that are not very attractive reading. It is, withal, a very distinct contribution as a useful and usable textbook.

"Muddled English on top of muddled ideas makes a bad mess of business letters." This sentence from the Preface of *The English of Commerce*¹ is part of an introductory letter written by Frank A. Vanderlip concerning the entire book. Opdycke makes the business letter his primary objective, to be sure, but he prefaces the central chapter by three chapters on "The Business Word," "The Business Sentence," and "The Business Paragraph," all treated most thoroughly, with abundant illustrations. One can readily assert that the grammatical and rhetorical principles here inductively approached are the bed rock drill material suitable for high schools of commerce. Following the chapter on "The Business Letter" are others on "Advertising," "The Business Talk," and "Sales," appropriate for a second year's work in commercial English. The book closes with three reference chapters on "Abbreviations and Special Terms," "Business Reports," and "Business Forms." *The English of Commerce*, both in content and in thoroughness of treatment, is one of the best, if not the very best, textbooks in its field.

The author has tried to make the next book "merely an introduction to the study of English, particularly suitable for the early years of the high school." *The Study of English*² is divided into thirty chapters, one for each school week; each chapter is definitely marked off into separate lessons; each lesson is intended to be short enough to allow outside reading. This last-named item in the author's plan is unique and highly commendable. Mr. Crawford follows an all too common practice nowadays of combining very many, too many, lines of activity within the covers of the same book. Grammar, principles of composition, penmanship, speaking and reading aloud, themes, oral and written, and many other topics appear; the last few chapters develop the

¹ JOHN B. OPDYCKE, *The English of Commerce*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920. Pp. 435.

² DOUGLAS GORDON CRAWFORD, *The Study of English*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1919. Pp. 338.

four forms of discourse. One pleasing innovation is the presence of memory gems at the close of chapters. The present writer protests that "Crossing the Bar" is not appropriate for thirteen-year-olds; but fairness compels the statement that the selection in question is the exception, not the rule. One may commend the extended use of dictation exercises without relying upon Mr. Crawford's analogy drawn from Brown's *How the French Boy Learns to Write*. The analogy, teach American boys English as the French teach boys their vernacular, is at best questionable logic. *The Study of English* is a good text, beautifully printed and bound, and featured by attractive pictures. On the whole, its outstanding feature as compared with similar texts lately offered is insistence upon grammatical relations and rhetorical principles as the core of a language course.

In the Preface of his *Laboratory Manual*¹ Stanley R. Oldham urges, "Let the English classroom become a laboratory for experiment and practice, with teacher and pupils working together in the exercises." His book is planned distinctly as a laboratory guide; its central contributing method appears to be this: high-school pupils are presented topics in composition; they are given abundant references for reading in books dealing with composition and rhetoric. Pupils, then, assigned topics in keeping with their individual needs, make their researches and prepare their writing or speaking. The idea is excellent; the field of composition is well staked out; literally thousands of topics are properly correlated and grouped. The *Manual* may be used alone, or it may be used in conjunction with any one of the standard composition textbooks.

Stratton's *Public Speaking*² is a textbook apparently intended for advanced high-school classes in oral English; it is suited also for college and normal-school classes of the junior-college level. Mr. Stratton guides his students in both the preparation and the presentation of their speeches. There is nothing particularly new either in materials or in methods suggested. The chief value of the book is its excellent organization of the large variety of activities which make up a worthy course in public speaking. A perusal of this latest textbook lends support to the contention that teachers of oral English have constantly made, namely, that *rhetoric* had its beginnings in the teaching of the spoken word, and that today one of the most effective means of acquainting young people with rhetorical principles is through the study of spoken discourse. Those skeptics who are inclined to look upon oral composition as a more or less petty training in vocalization should examine the substantial materials of sound thinking excellently set forth in Mr. Stratton's book.

¹ STANLEY R. OLDHAM, *Laboratory Manual of English Composition*. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1920. Pp. 148.

² CLARENCE C. STRATTON, *Public Speaking*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1920. Pp. 342. \$1.48.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

The Ronald Press has added to its list two attractive and useful companion volumes under the general title *Language for Men of Affairs*, with the subtitles, *Talking Business* and *Business Writing*.¹ The books are intended primarily for business men, endeavoring to guide them, sensibly and without overdue emphasis upon technicalities, into a command of oral and written communication. For this task the authors are well fitted. Mr. Clapp and Mr. Lee are leaders in the departments of journalism of New York University and of Columbia University, respectively; both authors include chapters contributed by various well-known authorities.

Talking Business does not confine itself to the technique of talking; it fully considers other less obvious but equally important matters. The great outstanding problem is how to produce the right reaction in the mind of the listener. *Business Writing* aids in preparing effective letters, reports, sales literature, and special articles of all kinds.

Although intended for business men, these two useful works are crammed full of chapters which no teacher of practical English writing and speaking can do without. They should be upon the reference shelves of every high-school and college library; indeed, for advanced classes in business communication they would serve admirably as textbooks. For example, the chapters on "How to Read" in the one book and "Testing Your Thought" in the other are admirable discussions of the latest word for English teachers: teach reading as a *creative* process; teach both writing and speaking as *weighing, judging, evaluating* processes.

A very attractive book, *Americans by Adoption*,² presents brief biographical sketches of Agassiz, Girard, Ericson, Carl Schurz, Theodore Thomas, Carnegie, J. J. Hill, Saint-Gaudens, and Riis, nine men of foreign birth whose lives became the symbols of the best American citizenship. Because of its rich content of sound Americanism, the book is highly appropriate as a high-school reader or reference book. It might well be found on the laboratory shelves of English and of social-science classrooms. The Preface consists of a short statement by William Allan Neilson of Smith College.

*The Desk Standard Dictionary*³ is a book of convenient size, $8\frac{7}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{3}{8}$ inches, bound in half-leather, very clearly printed, of moderate weight. The book gives 83,000 words, and contains recent words like "Argonne," "Belleau," "soviet," and "blimp." The dictionary has received the following commendation from Professor Brander Matthews of Columbia: "excellent in its

¹ JOHN M. CLAPP, *Talking Business*, pp. 526. JAMES MELVIN LEE, *Business Writing*, pp. 611. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1920.

² JOSEPH HUSBAND, *Americans by Adoption*. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920. Pp. 153.

³ *The Desk Standard Dictionary*. Augmented and revised by Frank H. Vizetelly. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1919. Pp. 893.

arrangement, in its mechanical devices, in its recognition of simplified spelling, and in its admirable adaptation for daily use." It should be remarked that the dictionary follows in spelling "the usage of the best modern authorities."

The romance of *Typee*,¹ supposed to be true, certainly is much more accurate than most historical novels of sailors among natives of the South Seas. The tale is crammed full of folk ways; it is written in the clear, vigorous, and perfectly spontaneous style of a born-story-teller. Some of the sociological material, polyandry, for example, told in the form of narrative, very decidedly should be reserved for advanced classes in sociology.

The title chosen by Professor Erskine for his book *Democracy and Ideals*² is the theme of the first six essays on democratic ideals, social relationships, and education which comprise the book. Style and quality of the essays may be indicated by this excerpt:

To be good neighbors and to study life together! This seemed to be for a moment at least the genuine ideal of the two million American citizens who made up our armies abroad. They spoke in many languages, but they were learning to speak and to understand each other in one. They were of all origins but they were feeling for a common future. On the soil of France the German blows were forging an American Nation. Or so it seemed, at least. If the appearance should in the end prove an illusion, the war would indeed be for us, not a crusade ending in a spiritual rescue, but only a slaughter that filled the world's graveyards.

Along with the classic essays of the traditional courses in English may well be placed this timely, wholesome, and thoroughly sympathetic interpretation of democratic responsibilities and ideals.

REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTES

Teaching subnormal children.—A recent contribution³ to the educational psychology of mentally deficient children is of interest alike to the student of abnormal psychology and to the teacher or administrative officer concerned with the problem of training such defectives. Considering primarily the instructional aspect of the problem of subnormality, the writer bases her observations upon the results of psychological research and endeavors to define the possible outcomes of such instruction in terms of these data. In the first four chapters there is a general discussion of variability in mental capacity, the social aspects of subnormality, methods of classification and identification. Chapters v to ix, inclusive, treat of the nature of the defective with respect to the process and the limits of development, variability in the

¹ STERLING A. LEONARD (Editor), *Typee, A Romance of the South Seas*, by Herman Melville. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Howe, 1920. Pp. 359.

² JOHN ERSKINE, *Democracy and Ideals*. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1920. Pp. 152.

³ LETA S. HOLLINGWORTH, *The Psychology of Subnormal Children*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1920. Pp. xix+288.